

PRE-SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Bernadette's Playgroup,
Londonderry

Voluntary playgroup

Report of a Follow-up inspection
in December 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST BERNADETTE'S PLAYGROUP, LONDONDERRY (2AB-0040)

The original inspection carried out in November 2014, concluded that the playgroup needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of the children. The inspection identified the need to:

- ensure there is suitable progression in learning across all aspects of the pre-school curriculum, particularly in the development of early mathematical concepts and language and learning outdoors;
- for the staff to exploit the full learning potential of activities and daily routines more consistently in their interactions with children;
- develop further the capacity of leadership and management capacity for effective self-evaluation and development planning.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out interim follow-up visits in September 2015 and February 2016 and a follow-up inspection on 13 December 2016.

Since the inspection, the following actions or changes have taken place:

- A temporary deputy leader has been in post since September 2016.
- A new temporary member of staff was appointed in November 2016.
- The management committee has provided funding for additional planning time for each member of staff.
- The staff have visited another pre-school setting in the local area.

Key Findings

- The children's achievements are now good. The children are very well settled and confident in the routines of the day. During the follow-up inspection there were many examples of the children helping each other and showing kindness to their peers and to staff and visitors.
- The children are able to use and understand early mathematical language and concepts, in particular in relation to number, time, shape and measurement. The children participate regularly in sustained periods of reading in the book corner and refer regularly to the topic books placed throughout the playroom. During the follow-up inspection the children rehearsed a short dramatic performance in preparation for family and friends; the children organised themselves independently of staff and spoke in a clear and enthusiastic manner.
- The children's individual art work is imaginative and detailed; they respond well to the staff's encouragement to experiment with colour and textures. The children use the musical instruments with care and are developing a good sense of rhythm. The children's fine and gross motor skills are well developed and they show dexterity and perseverance particularly at construction activities. In outdoor play the children demonstrate good co-ordination, independence and turn-taking.

- Staff interactions are now consistently good and at times very good. A particular strength is the use of real-life contexts to develop and extend the children's understanding particularly in early mathematics. The staff work well as a team and provide a calm and relaxed environment for the children.
- The planning has been reviewed and now provides more detail on the intended learning outcomes. While there are regular and relevant observations across the pre-school curriculum, there is a need to develop further the use of assessment to inform future planning and track progression in the children's learning.
- The self-evaluation process is developing well; while the staff and the management committee have identified appropriate priorities and have detailed action plans in place to guide the improvement process it will be important to pace the scope of the improvements within the time available and prioritise further as required.
- The staff and management committee have made significant improvement in establishing and maintaining links with families, schools, and the local community. Regular and purposeful outings to local venues, along with well-planned visitor invitations to the playgroup, enhance well the children's learning experiences and improve familiarity with the local environment.
- The early years specialist from the Early Years Organisation provides very good support and has made a significant contribution to the work of the playgroup in the follow-up process.

Overall effectiveness

St Bernadette's Playgroup demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement, in particular in the development of the use of the children's observations across the pre-school curriculum to inform future planning and track progression in their learning.

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